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the sociological sections are potentially of great use if they provide information regarding tribal attitudes and traditions which might have an important bearing upon political developments in a critical situation. The biographic sections have perhaps the greatest potential value, but, unfortunately, they are not usually kept up to date. It would be especially useful if country or area biographic surveys were produced and kept up to date on a loose-leaf basis. Other chapters of the NIS are not usually of direct value to the substantive officers of an Embassy.

- e) Most NIS briefs (chapters 1) that Embassy officers have seen appear to have relatively greater value than the other NIS chapters in providing either orientation or a relatively quick overview of the situation in particular countries. The briefs, if periodically updated and perhaps supplemented by NIEs, could provide much of the background information that substantive officers should have available with regard to other countries in the same area. They are also useful for briefing new officers arriving at the post on direct transfer from other areas.
- departmental program designed to provide basic intelligence to various end users, including embassies and overseas posts. The Embassy is not convinced that for its own purposes at least such intelligence needs to be provided either in such detail or as part of such an all-comprehensive program as the NIS. For certain needs it might be better to have special types of "coordinated" intelligence production. For instance, to fill the need for detailed background information on sociological factors that are of importance in the economic and political development of African states, something in the form of a specially prepared (and classified if necessary) version of the Ethnographic Survey of Africa might be more useful than the current sociological sections of the NIS. One has the impression, moreover, that the present NIS program has been overstandardized and that variations in style and format (as well, perhaps, as in content) would increase the applicability and usefulness of the material produced on individual countries.

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For the Ambassador:

William B. Edmondson Second Secretary of Embassy